Mixing and blending Music with *Audacity*

Launch *Audacity*. **(Start => All Programs => Audacity). Note:** If *Audacity* is not already on your computer, refer to the handout "How to Install Software..." for installation instructions.

A. Combining songs into a continuous medley

1. A *medley* is a series of songs or portions of songs that flow one into the other.
2. Pull down **Project** => **Import Audio...** , click in the **Look in** menu at the top, navigate to "Royalty-free Music" on the **D:** drive, and click on any one of the songs.
3. Repeat step 2 and select another song. Each song will be loaded into a separate track. You can cut out any parts of a song that you don't want: look at the upper left corner of the *Audacity* screen and click on the **selection tool** I , select the region that you want to delete, and press the **delete** key on the keyboard.
4. Look at the upper left corner of the *Audacity* screen and click on the **time shift tool** ↔ .
5. Use this tool to drag the second song to the right, overlapping with the first song so that the second song starts as the first one fades out. To hear what the transition sounds like, switch back to the **selection tool** I , select the desired region, and click the play button ▶
6. You can also "fade-out" the end of the first song and "fade in" the beginning of the next song: select the desired region, then pull down **Effect => Fade In** or **Fade Out**.
7. To save the entire medley as one MP3 file, select **File => Export as MP3...** , navigate to the desired save location, type in a file name into the **File name** box, and click **Save**.

B. Adding a vocal track (singing or spoken commentary) to a music file

1. Use this procedure to add voice narration to a music background, or to build up a multi-layer performance where you sing a duet with yourself, or play all the parts of an instrumental work, or to sing along with a karaoke accompaniment, etc. (See the handout "Recording sound with a microphone", parts a and b, for microphone set-up instructions).

2. Select **Edit** => **Preferences**. Click "Play other tracks while recording new one".

3. Under Recording/Channels, select **"1 (Mono)"**. If you were using a stereo microphone, you could use **"2 (Stereo)"**. Then click the **Quality** tab and select Default sample rate **44100 Hz**, default Sample format 32-bit float and click **OK**.

4. Pull down **Project** => **Import Audio...**, click in the **Look in** menu at the top, navigate to the folder containing the music, and select the music that you want to use.

5. Press the green **Play** ▶ button to play the music and click the **Stop** ■ button to stop.

6. Click on the place in the music where you want to begin recording and click the **Record** button ● to begin recording from the microphone. Click the **Stop** ■ button to stop. Each separate recording is added to a separate track. To play back the recording, press the **Play** button ▶. All the tracks are played back simultaneously, but you can use the **Mute** and **Solo** buttons on the left to mute (quiet) a track or to play it solo (by itself).

7. **Adjusting the volume of tracks**. Adjust the volume of any track by dragging
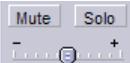
the slider at the left-hand end of that track to make it softer or louder.

8. If you don't like a track that you have recorded, you can delete it by clicking on the close box ⊠ in the *upper left corner* of the waveform window, then record again.

9. To delete sections of any audio track that you don't want, drag the mouse pointer over that section of the waveform and press the **Delete** key. To hear one section of the sound file, drag the mouse pointer over that portion of the waveform and click the **Play** button or press the space bar. You can also **Cut**, **Copy**, and **Paste** sections of a sound file.

10. **Aligning the tracks.** Click on the **time shift tool** ↔ in the upper left corner of the *Audacity* screen. Use this tool to shift each track into its proper place. To hear what that section sounds like, switch back to the **selection tool** I , select the desired section of the waveform, and press the **space bar** to start and stop.

11. **Adding other sound tracks**. While the other tracks are still showing on the screen, you can pull down **Project** => **Import Audio...** to add another audio file (in WAV or MP3 format) to the project. Use the **time shift tool** ↔ to shift each track into its proper place. Adjust the overall volume of a track by dragging the slider at the left-hand end of that track so that it is not too loud. Note: You can also **Cut**, **Copy**, and **Paste** sections of a sound file within a track and between tracks.

12. **(Optional) Fading the music up and down.** If you want to fade the music up in the pauses between narrative comments, then fade it back down when the narration continues, click on the **Envelope Tool** ∿ in the upper left corner. Use this tool to click on the waveform to create drag points (little dots) and then use them to drag the envelope up and down to fade the music up and down as needed. (This takes some practice).

13. **(Optional) Special Effects.** You can add various special effects to any track. It's best to add effect to a *copy* of the audio track. First, select the track by clicking on the white area to the left of the waveform, below the L/R slider. Select **Edit => Copy**. Then pull down **Project** and select **New Stereo Track**. Select **Edit => Paste.** Then pull down **Effect** and select the desired effect. For example, to add richness to a solo instrumental or singing performance, try adding reverberation (**GVerb**) and **Phaser** effects. When you click the Play button, both the original and effect-processed sound will play simultaneously. You can conveniently control the blend of original and effect-processed sound by adjusting the slider at the left-hand end of that track to make that track softer or louder. (For information about the various effects available, click **Help => Contents...,** then double-click **Audacity Help, Menu Bar,** and **Effect Menu.)**

14. **Saving**. To save the sound file, select **File => Export as MP3...** , navigate to the desired save location (e.g. the "Sounds" folder on the desktop), type in a file name into the File name box, and click **Save**. The resulting MP3 file can be used just like any other MP3 file.

15. To save the entire *Audacity* screen with all the separate tracks, select **File => Save Project**. You can open the project file later in *Audacity* and continue working on the project. Close *Audacity* when you are finished.